

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 02432 031727Z
ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 2432

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE, SHUM, PINT, RO
SUBJECT: ROMANIAN DISSIDENT VLAD GEORGESCU

A. BUCHAREST 2389, B. BUCHAREST 2393

1. REFTEL A REPORTED THE DETENTION OF HISTORIAN VLAD GEORGESCU AND REFTEL B MY CONNECTIONS WITH HIM INCLUDING THE FACT THAT HE HAD GIVEN ME JUST BEFORE HIS DETENTION SOME ARTICLES HE HAD WRITTEN. I HAD SUBSEQUENTLY TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF A PHONE CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MACOVESCU ON OTHER BUSINESS TO EXPRESS MY CONCERN OVER VLAD'S DETENTION BOTH AS A FRIEND OF MINE AND OF MANY AMERICAN HISTORIANS. MACOVESCU HAD SAID HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE DETENTION BUT WOULD LOOK INTO IT. A RUMOR WE HEARD AT THAT TIME THAT VLAD HAD BEEN RELEASED TURNED OUT TO BE INCORRECT.

2. EARLY AFTERNOON APRIL 2 I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM SILVIU BRUCAN (ROMANIAN MINISTER TO WASHINGTON IN THE FIFTIES, NOW A UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AND FOR ROMANIA SOMETHING OF A LIBERAL, NON-CONFORMIST IN HIS IDEAS) ASKING IF I COULD SEE HIM THAT AFTERNOON OR THE NEXT MORNING. WE MET LATE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND HE DELIVERED THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE WHICH HE SAID
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HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO DO BY HIGH "PARTY" CIRCLES ON A PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL BASIS. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK AT A MEETING EARLIER IN THE DAY AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, THE FIRST MEETING THERE TO WHICH HE'D BEEN INVITED "IN TEN YEARS."

3. THE MESSAGE HAD THREE PARTS:

A. MY ACCEPTING A DOCUMENT FROM VLAD GEORGESCU (WHOM BRUCAN CONFIRMED TO BE UNDER ARREST) WAS AN "UNFRIENDLY ACT" AND "AN INTERFERENCE IN ROMANIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS."

B. IT WAS EXPECTED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO REPETITION WHATEVER IN THE FUTURE OF SUCH AN ACTION.

C. I WAS STILL REGARDED WITH A GREAT DEAL OF APPRECIATION FOR ALL THE MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN ROMANIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS OVER THE YEARS IN WHICH I HAD PLAYED A ROLE AND IT WAS HOPED THAT I WOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY SUCH A POSITIVE ROLE.

4. BRUCAN SUPPLEMENTED THE MESSAGE BY UNDERLINING THE DESIRE OF THOSE WHO SENT HIM (WHOSE IDENTITY HE SAID HE COULD NOT DIVULGE. I ASKED AT ONE POINT IF IT WERE STEFAN ANDREI, BUT HE WOULD SAY ONLY IT WAS A MESSAGE FROM THE "PARTY" AND "HIGH UP.") TO TREAT THE MATTER CONFIDENTIALLY. AFTER ALL, IF THEY WANTED TO MAKE A SPECTACLE OF IT, HE SAID, THERE WERE PLENTY OF PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT WHO COULD HAVE CALLED ME IN. HE SAID THAT HE HIMSELF HAD AGREED TO UNDERTAKE THE MAVSAGE-CARRYING MISSION BECAUSE HE FELT THE US WAS MAKING A SERIOUS MISTAKE IN ITS HANDLING OF HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS. THEY WERE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS AND NEEDED ATTENTION BUT THERE WERE OTHER QUESTIONS OF EVEN GREATER IMPORTANCE AND WE WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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GIVING PRIMARY WHERE IT DIDN'T NOW BELONG.

5. I TOLD BRUCAN THAT ALTHOUGH I COULD NOT ACCEPT THE ACCUSATIONS IN HIS MESSAGE NOR AGREE WITH HIS OWN ASSUMPTION ABOUT HOW WE HANDLED HUMAN RIGHTS, I DID APPRECIATE THE WILLINGNESS OF THOSE WHO SENT HIM TO USE THIS CONFIDENTIAL APPROACH RATHER THAN A CONFRONTATIONAL ONE.

6. SO FAR AS HIS MESSAGE WAS CONCERNED, I COMMENTED:

A. I HAD KNOWN VLAD GEORGESCU FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS AS A FRIEND AND KNEW OF NO ACTION ON HIS PART THAT PREPARED ME FOR HIS BEING ARRESTED. I KNEW NUMBERS OF AMERICAN AND ROMANIAN HISTORIANS WHO HAD HIGH REGARD FOR HIM AS A COLLEAGUE AND AS A PERSON. (BRUCAN INTERJECTED THAT THOUGH HE DID NOT KNOW GEORGESCU WELL HE TOO WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN OF THE ARREST.) HE AND I TALKED ABOUT HIS WORK FROM TIME

TO TIME AND I HAD SEEN SAMPLES OF IT. THE NIGHT IN QUESTION HE HAD GIVEN ME AN ENVELOPE WITH SOME COPIES OF HIS CURRENT WORK WHICH I HAD NOT EVEN LOOKED AT THEN AND WHICH I HAD BARELY BEGUN TO READ. THEREFORE I COULD IN NO WAY ACCEPT THE CHARGE THAT I HAD SOMEHOW COMMITTED AN UNFRIENDLY ACT OR INTERFERED IN ROMANIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS BY ACCEPTING A DOCUMENT. (COMMENT: BRUCAN KEPT REFERRING TO A DOCUMENT, SO I USED THE SAME TERMINOLOGY. MY GUESS IS THAT THIS REFERS TO THE PAPER ANALYZING RCP POSITION ON KEY HISTORICAL ISSUES.)

B. SO FAR AS MY FUTURE CONDUCT WAS CONCERNED, I RECOGNIZED THE RIGHT OF ANY GOVERNMENT TO HAVE ITS OWN DEFINITION OF WHAT WAS SUITABLE CONDUCT FOR FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES ON ITS TERRITORY. AT THE SAME TIME I CONSIDERED IT INCUMBENT ON THE ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES TO TELL ME JUST WHAT CONDUCT I WAS TO CONFIDENTIAL

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FOREGO SO I COULD THEN CONSULT MY OWN GOVERNMENT TO SEE IF WE ACCEPTED SUCH A DEFINITION. I WONDERED FOR EXAMPLE IF THE ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES WERE THINKING OF:

(1) AN INDEX OF PROSCRIBED PERSONS, (2) A BAN ON MY HAVING ANY CONTACT WITH ANYONE WHO MIGHT SOMEDAY TURN OUT TO BE ARRESTABLE, WHICH COULD INCLUDE A GOOD PART OF THE POPULATION, OR (3) EVEN PERHAPS MY NOT SPEAKING TO ANYONE WHO HAD AN OPINION THAT DIFFERED FROM THE STANDARD LINE.

7. I ASKED BRUCAN IF HE HAD ANY FURTHER COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR ME. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THAT I WAS NOT BEING ASKED TO LIMIT MY CONTACTS. IN FACT IT HAD BEEN MENTIONED TO HIM THAT ONE WAY OF CLOSING THE INCIDENT WAS TO RETURN THE DOCUMENT TO THE AUTHORITIES. IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THAT THE FEAR WAS THAT I WOULD SENT IT ABROAD THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS IN ORDER TO HAVE IT PUBLISHED. I TOLD BRUCAN I CONSIDER I HAVE OBLIGATIONS TOWARD MY FRIENDS AND I ALSO HAVE OFFICIAL OBLIGATIONS. I STILL HAD THE DOCUMENT AND HAD NO INTENTION OF ACTING AS A PAMPHLET DISTRIBUTOR OR PUBLISHER. THE SUGGESTION THAT I RETURN THE DOCUMENT NOT TO THE PERSON WHO HAD GIVEN IT TO ME BUT TO THE AUTHORITIES MADE ME PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO READ IT THOROUGHLY TO DETERMINE WHAT WAS SO DAMAGING. IN ANY CASE, I COULD NOT ACCEPT THE IDEA OF HANDING IT OVER WITHOUT CONSULTING WASHINGTON, SINCE THIS REQUEST IMPLIED A NEW DOCTRINE, SO FAR AS I KNEW, OF A GOVERNMENT INSISTING ON OBTAINING ANY DOCUMENTS THAT CAME INTO THE HANDS OF FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS.

8. BRUCAN SAID IN HIS OWN OPINION IT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR ME TO RETURN THE DOCUMENT, SINCE MY STATING THAT I DID NOT INTEND TO PUBLICIZE IT SHOULD BE ENOUGH. HE SAID HE WOULD REPORT OUR CONVERSATION IN DETAIL TO THOSE WHO HAD SENT HIM, AND I ASKED HIM TO GET BACK
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IN TOUCH WITH ME LATER THAT NIGHT ON IN THE MORNING. IT WAS IMPORTANT, I STRESSED, TO KNOW THEIR REACTION IN MAKING MY RECOMMENDATIONS TO WASHINGTON, ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE HEARINGS THAT WERE DUE TO START MONDAY ON THE EARTHQUAKE AID BILL FOR ROMANIA.

9. I HAVE JUST TALKED TO BRUCAN, WHO SAYS HE HAS NOTHING MTE TO COMMUNICATE AS YET.

10. I HAVE NO INTENTION OF TURNING ANY DOCUMENT GEORGESCU GAVE ME OVER TO THE ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES, BUT WILL SEND WHAT I HAVE TO WASHINGTON WITH MY COMMENTS ONCE I HAVE READ ALL THE MATERIAL.
BARNES

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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TAGS: SHUM, PINT, RO, CSCE, (GEORGESCU, VLAD)
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